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VOLUME 4 NUMBER 14

JULY 1. 1987



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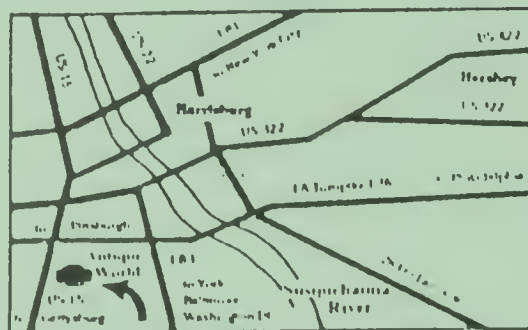
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State Charter 1984

Corporate #777790

Federal I.D. Tax #25-1519242

Affiliated with the American Numismatic Association (C-101441) and Middle Atlantic Numismatics Association (C-130)



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FRANK VITTOR, PITTSBURGH SCULPTOR

Designer of the Gettysburg Commemorative Half Dollar

By Wayne K. Homren

Frank Vittor was a Pittsburgh sculptor whose works adorn buildings and public places throughout Western Pennsylvania. His numismatic fame was assured when he completed his design of the Gettysburg commemorative half dollar, issued in 1936. This article outlines the history of the artist and his coin. Several of Vittor's sculptures in the Pittsburgh area are described, for the benefit of native and visiting numismatists who may not be aware of their connection to the commemorative coin series.

The Artist Frank Vittor was born in 1888, in Mozzato, Italy, near Milan. His family included many artists, and by the age of nine young Frank had already begun sculpting. His formal art education took place in Milan and at Rodin's studio in Paris. In 1906 he came to the United States to be a student of Stanford White. The eighteen-year-old Vittor was left to fend for himself, when just a week after his arrival, White was murdered. Vittor eventually established himself in New York where he became an assistant teacher of sculpture classes at Cooper Union. It is said that he also worked several years for Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

In 1917 Vittor visited his wife's relatives in Pittsburgh, bringing with him over eighty of his bronze works for display in a local gallery. His work was immediately popular and several local art patrons, including famous scientist John Alfred Brashear, convinced Vittor to make Pittsburgh his home. In 1920 he moved to Pittsburgh and spent the rest of his life there, passing away in 1968.

Vittor taught sculpture at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon), the local YMHA and YWHA, and Carnegie Museum. He founded the Pittsburgh Society of Sculptors, and was a member of the Architectural Club of Pittsburgh and the city Planning Commission. He is known as the "Sculptor of Presidents" because of his busts of Coolidge, Wilson, and Theodore Roosevelt. In 1959 he sculpted the heads of all thirty-four presidents for a museum in Florida. In his lifetime he sculpted over two hundred other portrait busts in bronze [Gay 83].

Vittor's Pittsburgh Legacy Frank Vittor was one of Pittsburgh's most prolific sculptors. He left a legacy of over fifty memorials and fountains throughout the Pittsburgh area. Some of his more prominent works are described here.

Highway Art In the days when the automobile and public highways were still a relatively new phenomenon, it was not uncommon to adorn new roads with artworks. In 1922, Pittsburgh opened an improved roadway connecting downtown with Oakland, the cultural heart of the city. Dedicated on Armistice Day, the Boulevard of the Allies had at its Grant Street entrance two grand stone columns. Frank Vittor designed the columns, each surmounted by an American eagle perched atop a granite sphere. The eagles still stand guard for today's commuters.

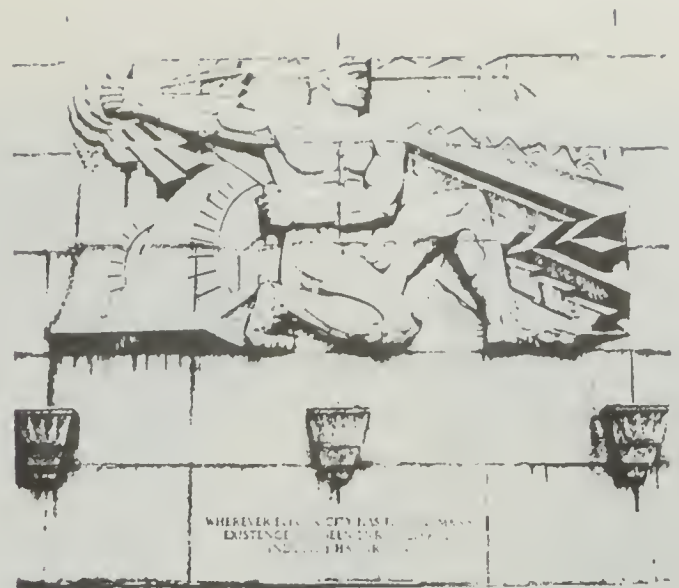
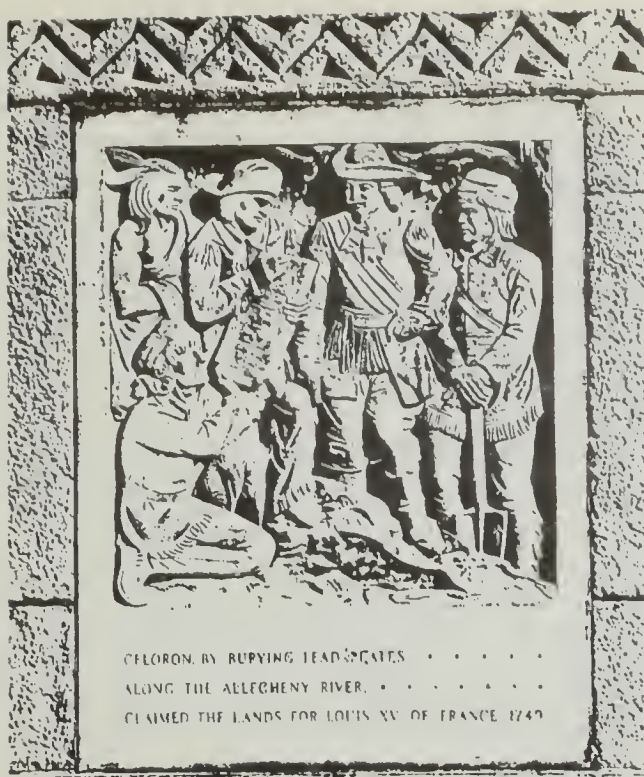


Figure 1: Vittor Highway Reliefs

In 1931, Frank Vittor designed granite reliefs for twelve massive directional pylons erected at the entrances of boulevards throughout Allegheny County. The reliefs depicted scenes of the early history of the local area. Only five pylons survive today. One is on Saw Mill Run Boulevard at Warrington Avenue (near the Liberty Tunnels). Two complete pairs of pylons still flank the Oakmont entrance to Allegheny River Boulevard and the Bellevue entrance to Ohio River Boulevard (see Figure 1, left).

Vittor's work also decorates the George Westinghouse Memorial Bridge, which carries Route 30 across the Turtle Creek Valley. At the time of its completion in 1934, this bridge was the longest reinforced concrete span in the U.S. Four ten by eighteen-foot granite reliefs adorn the pylons at the ends of the bridge. The subjects are transportation, electricity, steel, and pioneers of the Turtle Creek Valley (see Figure 1, right). "All the reliefs typify the Art Deco style in their massive, angular figures, jagged line, and streamlined, simplified forms. The lightning bolt motif, so strong in the twenties and thirties, is used effectively in *Electricity*. The stone in each relief is cut to a depth of eight inches, producing bold lines from the cast shadows.."([Gay 83], p347).

War Memorials After The Great War ended in Europe, Vittor found himself busied with many commissions for war memorials throughout the greater Pittsburgh area. One of the more notable of these is at Peabody High School on Highland Avenue in East Liberty. The memorial stands at the East Liberty Boulevard entrance, and once served as a base for a two-hundred-foot flagpole. The work was paid for by students and alumni of the school.

Dedicated in 1923, the work includes seven fourteen-foot figures representing "Columbia calling her sons to defend humanity and liberty. The answer is indicated by intrepid youth arming himself to answer her call. Then comes the pathetic departure, youth bidding mother a farewell as it leaves for war. Then comes the return of the victorious hero, a work showing the affection and esteem with which the youth is greeted. Then you see the crowning of youth by fame. The figure of grief shows the nation mourning for those who did not return" ([Gay 83], p282-283).



Figure 2: Vittor World War II Memorial

In 1955, Vittor created a statue of Honus Wagner, the legendary shortstop for the Pittsburgh Pirates. "The Flying Dutchman" is often called the greatest shortstop in the history of baseball. The ten-foot bronze statue was installed at Forbes Field in Oakland and was later moved to the new Three Rivers Stadium on the North Side.

Near Phipps Conservatory in Oakland's Schenley Park stands a memorial to Christopher Columbus, designed by Vittor in 1958. A ten-foot bronze statue of Columbus stands atop a twenty-foot granite base.

One of Vittor's last works (1963) has two numismatic connections. His ten-foot bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson at Jefferson Memorial Park in the South Hills is surrounded by a circle of thirty-foot Corinthian columns saved after the demolition of the Bank of Pittsburgh building on Fourth Avenue, downtown. The Bank, founded in 1815, went out of business in 1931. The classical building was demolished in 1944, yet the facade stood on the site like ancient ruins for several years.

The president of the cemetery, when checking on Vittor's progress with the Jefferson statue, thought the face looked "too Roman." Another man pulled out a Jefferson nickel. "More like this," he said to Vittor, who soon altered the nose to suit ([Gay 83], p354-355).

Other Vittor World War I memorials stand in Oakmont (Allegheny River Boulevard at Pennsylvania Avenue), and Braddock (Library Street near Braddock Avenue). The granite and bronze Herron Hill Park memorial stands at one of the highest points in Allegheny County.

Twenty years later the world was at war once again, and in 1949 Frank Vittor designed a World War II memorial for the 5,000 veterans from Pittsburgh's Eighth Ward. The eighteen-foot limestone memorial stands in Morrow Park, at the intersections of Baum Boulevard, Liberty and South Aiken Avenues (see Figure 2, at left).

Statues One of Frank Vittor's earliest Pittsburgh works was a statue of his friend John Brashear, completed in 1920. Brashear was an internationally known astronomer who built the University of Pittsburgh's Allegheny Observatory in Riverview Park on the North Side. The statue sits in the Observatory, over a crypt holding Brashear's ashes. The sculpture has an unusual rough texture, not unlike the work of Vittor's onetime teacher, Rodin.

Fountains, Plaques and Busts Not all of Vittor's public works were large. He designed thirty drinking fountains for Pittsburgh's urban parks. The small bronze fountains sported a delightful dolphin motif. Most have been lost, but one survivor stands at the Highland Avenue entrance of Highland Park.

The Allegheny County Courthouse on Grant Street is adorned with two plaques designed by Frank Vittor. The Jacob M. Gusky plaque, dedicated in 1935, honors the businessman who opened Pittsburgh's first department store (just after the Civil War). Another plaque honors Captain William B. Rogers, a colorful riverman who pioneered major developments in the area's waterways, including raising Allegheny River bridges to better accomodate river traffic.

A 1931 bronze tablet by Vittor commemorates two broadcasting firsts. The world's first commercial radio station was KDKA, in Pittsburgh. The station began broadcasting in 1920 [Lorant 75]. On Christmas Sunday evening 1922, the station broadcast a sermon from the Shadyside Presbyterian Church. The broadcast was recieved in the arctic regions by men of Hudson's Bay Company. On Easter Sunday morning 1929, a church service broadcast was recieved by Admiral Byrd's Expedition in Antarctica. The commemorative tablet is in the church on Westminster Place in Shadyside.

The current studios of KDKA are in Gateway Center, downtown. A life-size bronze bust of Marconi by Frank Vittor stands in the lobby. It commemorates the first transatlantic wireless message, sent by radio inventor Guglielmo Marconi in 1901. The bust was dedicated in 1952.

Proposed Momumental Works Vittor conceived several works on a monumental scale that for one reason or another, never came into being. In 1932 he created a plaster model of George Washington as a young surveyor. A one-hundred-foot, floodlit statue was to be erected atop Mount Washington, overlooking downtown Pittsburgh. The model is now lost.

In 1951 Vittor submitted a design for a one-hundred-foot statue for Pittsburgh's Point State Park. The statue depicted Joe Magarac, the allegorical steelworker. The design was rejected, but Vittor's three-foot plaster model is now displayed at the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society in Oakland.

The Gettysburg Half Dollar An issue of up to fifty thousand half dollars commemorating the Battle of Gettysburg was permitted in an authorizing Act of Congress on June 16, 1936. The half dollar was to commemorate the approaching seventy-fifth anniversary of the bloody 1863 Civil War battle. Specifically, the issue was coined for the Blue and Gray Reunion of July 1-3 1938, where Civil War veterans of both the North and South met to reminisce. The inscription "' BLUE . AND . GRAY . REUNION '" appears on the lower obverse border.

One of the most crucial episodes in that historic conflict, the battle is known as "the high-water mark of the Confederacy." General Hooker commanded the Union Army of the Potomac against General Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, as Lee attempted an invasion of the North. The fighting on July 1-3 1863 left some 18,000 Union soldiers and 23,000 Confederates killed or wounded.

One of the first descriptions of the coin's design appeared in the November 1936 issue of *The Numismatist*. The article quoted Paul L. Roy, executive secretary of the Pennsylvania State Commission in charge of the commemorative.

Frank Vittor, internationally known sculptor, of Pittsburgh, has been commissioned by the Pennsylvania State Commission to design the obverse and reverse of the Gettysburg commemorative half dollar soon to be minted. The suggested designs of the Pittsburgh sculptor were selected by the commission from fourteen suggestions submitted to the commission. Before announcing its selection the commission conferred with the Pennsylvania Art Commission and received the approval of the sculpturing committee of the latter group of Mr. Vittor's suggestions.

One side of the commemorative half dollar will be emblematic of the observance in 1938 of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, and the other side, showing the rugged head and shoulders of a Union and a Confederate soldier, will be emblematic of the reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic and the United Confederate Veterans to be held in Gettysburg during the anniversary observance in 1938. [Roy 36]

Photographs of the artist's models were printed in the June, 1937 *Numismatist*, shortly after they were released for publication [Roy 37]. David M. Bullowa, in his 1938 update of Howland Wood's monograph on *The Commemorative Coinage of the United States*, wrote that "the models were prepared by Frank Vittor, a well-known Pittsburgh sculptor, and when completed were reduced by the Medalllic Art Company of New York" [Bullowa 38].

Don Taxay's *Illustrated History of U.S. Commemorative Coinage* pictures other sketch models of Vittor's. In correspondence between the Commission on Fine Arts and Mint Director Nellie Tayloe Ross, there is mention "of the fact that the faces and expressions of the eyes of the two soldiers are nearly identical but ... that the artist may have done this intentionally [Taxay 67]. Two different models actually sat for the artist; J. P. Sankey posed for the Union soldier, and H. R. Lee for the Confederate [Bullowa 38]. Perhaps Vittor intended the similarities to highlight the ironic "brother vs. brother" aspect of the war.



Figure 3: Gettysburg Half Dollar

Original plans called for the half dollars to be produced at all three mints (Philadelphia, Denver, and San Francisco). In the end, only the Philadelphia mint coined the pieces. In June, 1937 the mint struck 50,028 coins. Unsold coins numbering 23,100 were later returned to the Mint and melted, leaving a net coinage of 26,928.

Summary Frank Vittor was a prolific Pittsburgh sculptor who left a legacy of memorials, statues, and plaques across Western Pennsylvania. Numismatically, he is remembered as the designer of the Gettysburg Commemorative Half Dollar of 1936.

Acknowledgements The author would like to thank the members of Western PAN; this research was inspired by conversations held during a monthly meeting. *Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculpture* was an invaluable reference book; All sculpture photo credits go to Vernon Gay.

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Western Publishing Company, Racine, WI, 1987.

Epilogue *A Guide Book of United States Coins*, more commonly known as "The Red Book", gives this sixty-nine word description of the Gettysburg commemorative half dollar:

On June 16, 1936 Congress authorized a coinage of fifty-cent pieces in commemoration of the Battle of Gettysburg. The models were prepared by Frank Vittor, a Philadelphia sculptor. Portraits of a Union and Confederate veteran are shown on the obverse. Two shields representing the Union and Confederate armies separated by a double-bladed fasces are on the reverse. ([Yeoman 87], p216)

The wording of this entry has been unchanged since the first edition. It is incorrect of course, since Vittor was a PITTSBURGH sculptor. After reviewing a draft of this paper, Ken Bressett, editor of the "Red Book" agreed to correct the oversight in the next edition.

Wayne Homren, a native of Pittsburgh, has a degree in Computer Science, from the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Michigan. Works for the Carnegie Group, a computer software company. Collects money of the Civil War, Civil War tokens and encased postage stamps. Member of TAMS, ANA, PAN, SPMC, Civil War Token Society, Early American Coppers Society and currently Secretary of the Western Pennsylvania Numismatic Society.

THE VERGULDE DRAECK

By Thomas Sebring

In recent years a series of newspaper and magazine articles have related the stories of astonishing salvages of sunken treasure from Spanish galleons, Dutch East Indiamen, and even a pirate ship. After lying untouched for hundreds of years these wrecks have become accessible due to the availability of improved diving equipment and underwater metal detection gear. We can expect continuing discoveries as well financed treasure salvors equipped with high technology salvage equipment and specially equipped salvage vessels continue their relentless quests. Following is the tragic story of a Dutch East Indiaman sunk in 1656, and salvaged in the 1960's.

The *Vergulde Draeck* (Gilt Dragon) was a legendary and long sought treasure ship. She was wrecked in 1656 off the Western Australian coast and a steady parade of treasure seekers searched for her remains for over three hundred years without success.

A 160-foot East Indiaman, she had left Texel in the Netherlands in October of 1655 with a complement of 250 crew and passengers. In addition to 78,000 guilders in silver coin in Mexican pieces of eight, she also had on board a cargo of ivory tusks which she had loaded in Africa.



Contemporary 18th century painting of Dutch East India Company headquarters in Amsterdam.

On April 28, 1656, she was on the normal eastward beat of her voyage, nearing the coast of Australia, where she would then have turned north toward her destination of Batavia. On arrival her passengers would have disembarked to go to their new jobs or to join family members. She would then have unloaded her cargo of silver coins and taken on a cargo of cloves, nutmeg, silks, and other exotic eastern goods for the return voyage. However, most of the 193 passengers and crew who had survived the first part of the voyage were never to reach their destination.

At four in the morning, the *Vergulde Draeck* tore out her bottom on a submerged reef three miles from the mainland. Fierce winds and strong currents battered the ship throwing many of the passengers and the cargo into the foaming seas, and damaging the ship beyond repair. The ship settled on the reefs with her remaining passengers and crew huddling together miserably through the terrible night.

Against great odds several boats were launched the following day and seventy-five people were able to reach the mainland. Captain Peter Alberts sent off seven of his best seamen in the ship's pinnace for help. They survived a terrible 2,400 mile trip to Batavia, arriving near death from thirst and starvation. Rescue ships were dispatched immediately, but were unsuccessful in their attempts to find survivors or the ship's wreckage. It is speculated that the survivors had either been killed or taken as slaves by the aborigines.



Batavia in the seventeenth century, a contemporary painting.

Many expeditions searched for the ship's remains over the years. In 1931 a small wooden chest of seventeenth century silver coins next to a skeleton of a man was found inland in the sandhills. In the last moments of his life staggering across the burning wastes, the desperate survivor was apparently unwilling to leave behind the useless pieces of metal. The grisly discovery gives us a poignant clue as to the probable fate of the other ship's survivors.

In April, 1963, an Australian named Jack Robinson was spearfishing about three miles off the coast with four other men, when one of the divers found several yellow bricks of the type commonly carried by Dutch ships as ballast. Shortly afterward, one of the men found an elephant tusk. These artifacts seemed to point to the *Vergulde Draeck*. A professional salvage team was assembled quickly and salvage operations began under the supervision of the Western Australian Museum. A search of the bottom produced a considerable quantity of artifacts including cannon, tableware, cannon balls, candle holders, and Bellarmine jugs. One of the cannon carried the tell-tale insignia VOC, indicating that they had indeed found the wreckage of a Dutch East Indiaman.

Further underwater search began to turn up isolated silver coins and then large quantities of them. When quickly cleaned by the excited divers, they proved to be Mexican eight reale cobs with dates ranging from 1652 to 1654. All of the accumulated evidence now definitely established that they had found the elusive *Vergulde Draeck*. Most of the artifacts and coins were added to the "Dutch Ship" collection of the Western Australia Museum, which had supervised the Gilt Dragon recovery operations.

* * * * *

The preceding article is taken from the author's recently published book, "Treasure Tales - Shipwrecks and Salvage". The book describes the exciting stories of major shipwrecks salvaged over the last twenty years - Spanish galleons, Dutch East Indiamen, French and Dutch warships, and even a pirate ship. Included are such well known wrecks as the Concepcion, Maravilla, Atocha, Akerendam, Batavia, Vergulde Draeck, Le Chameau, Association, and many others.

The author is a frequent speaker on the subject of shipwreck stories and salvage with a number of published articles on the subject. He is a member of the Numismatic Literary Guild, and his 1982 "Numismatist" article "A Taler and a Tale of Horror" won him an ANA Heath Literary Award. He is also a member of PAN.

The book is available for \$24.95 directly from the author, Thomas H. Sebring, P.O. Box 236, Berwyn, Pa. 19312.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Berman/Shulman — Investors Guide to U.S. Coins.
 Bowers — U.S. Dimes, Quarters and Half Dollars.
 Charlton — Std. Cat. of Canadian Coins, 1987.
 Official Investors Guide to Gold, Silver & Diamonds.
 Official Investors Guide to Gold Coins.
 Official Investors Guide to Silver Coins.
 Goevert — Value Trends of United States Coins.

Krause — Std. Cat. of World Coins, 1988 ed.
 Mishler — Coins Questions & Answers.
 Overton — Early Half Dollar Die Varieties.
 Rulaus — Tokens of the Gay 90's.
 Seaby's — Coins of England, 22nd. ed.
 Whitmans — ANA Grading Guide, 2nd. ed.
 Whitmans — Red Book.

Book information courtesy of Charles Heisler, Lancaster, Pa.

FROM THE PAST —

The following was selected from a copy of "The Coin Journal", issued by Charles T. Steigerwalt, of Lancaster, Pa. early in the year of 1883. Steigerwalt was a coin dealer, by vocation, for some 30 years in the Lancaster area. He conducted many auctions both in Lancaster and New York City and also issued several different coin publications during his active years, including one called "Numismatic News" in the early 1900's. The following excerpts provide a brief glimpse of the many coin papers and catalogs available during this period. The information provided through the courtesy of James Ward, Lititz, Pa.

Numismatic Journalism

Having recently secured an accumulated lot of numismatic papers, catalogues, etc.; formerly the property of an old collector we have gleaned a few facts in regard to the numismatic publications of the past few years. Though we have not the time to make these facts as complete as we would desire, we give them as best we can.

The Coin and Stamp Journal was first issued Jan. 1875, at Kansas, Mo., as a four page monthly, by W. E. Winner, at 50 cts per year. In July 1876, the publication office was removed to New York and Joseph J. Casey who had been editing the stamp department became the proprietor. From the Jan. 1877 issue it was smaller size but increased to eight pages. We do not know when it was last issued, our last number being Aug. 1877. It was interesting and ably conducted in both departments.

The Coin Circular was first issued Mar. 1875 by Geo. A. Dillingham at Titusville, Pa., at 35 cts per year. It was a neat little four page paper issued monthly, and we believe went out of existence early in 1877.

Scott's Coin Collector's Journal made its first appearance in Dec. 1875, as a monthly magazine at \$1.00 per year. It was edited for about a year by Ed. Frossard, and afterwards by D. Prosky. It is still published and now edited by Scott, himself. For this reason we suppose, he has increased the price to \$2.00 per year.

Numisma was commenced in Jan. 1877 shortly after Ed. Frossard had quit editing Scott's Journal. It was published then as now as a bi-monthly at 50 cts per annum. Frossard knows how to edit a paper and the early issues are as interesting as the present numbers. The pages of the first year's issues contain some excellent comments on Scott's first attempts to catalogue coins for sale at auction.

The Numismatic Journal made its appearance from North Adams, Mass., Aug. 1877, as a monthly at 35 cts. per year. It was edited by L. S. Drowne, but the first number was the last.

The Jersey Coin Journal, afterwards The Buffalo Coin Journal, was first issued Jan. 1878. It was sent free to his customers by Lewis C. Boysen, and was more of a price list than a coin paper. The last number bears date, May and June, 1879.

The Coin and Stamp Journal of Brooklyn, published by J. B. Strceton of that city as a four page monthly at 25 cts per year, was first issued Jan. 1878. It was continued for about a year - when it stopped we can not find out.

The first issue of our own paper, the Coin Journal appeared in Apr. 1878 as a four page monthly at 10 cts per year. Our first attempt was neatly printed but rather crude in regard to matter. The May and June No's were combined and after issuing these two numbers, we became disgusted with numismatic journalism and retired about a year. During 1879, we became desirous of renewing our publication and issued the first number of the second series for June and July, 1879. It was a two column four page paper issued bi-monthly at 25 cents per year. The following two issues, Aug. and Sept. Nov. and Dec., were of the same size but in the beginning of 1878 we doubled the size making a three column, four page paper. The next issue, No. 5, was increased to eight pages and made a quarterly which has continued until the present issue. Getting slightly behind, the first Vol. to consist of 6 No's took more than a year for completion and the second Vol. commenced Dec. 1879 and to commence the present Vol. with the beginning of the year we have lost one month. Our present price is 50 cents per year and the increase of size is too apparent to be mentioned.

Mason's Coin Collector's Herald was first issued June 1879 as an eight page quarterly at \$1.00 per annum. It is now in its third Vol. and will probably continue for many years unless changed, as we believe is contemplated, to a monthly Magazine.

The American Numismatic Herald made its appearance during 1879 from East Richland, O. It was edited by A. B. Carmen and its manner of publication is a standing joke. The extravagant price of 5 cts. per annum was charged for this valuable publication and two Vol's were issued, one paper in each. The first number is twice as large as the second and Carmen (nor any person else either) not being able to stand more than these two, gave it up in disgust.

Various other publications including those of Gambs, Andrus and others have very good coin departments in them but are not strictly coin papers.

One other we must mention before we close, The American Journal of Numismatics published at Boston and edited by Jeremiah Colburn of that city. This magazine is issued quarterly at \$2.00 per year and is now in its 16th Vol. It was commenced in 1866 and is mainly supported by the Numismatic Society under whose authority it is published.

* * * * *

MARDI GRAS DOUBLOONS

By Michael R. Fuljenz

H. Alvin Sharpe bid adieu to numismatics on October 22, 1982. But before passing away, he established himself as a Mardi Gras legend. For those unfamiliar with the Mardi Gras carnival, it is loosely translated as "farewell to flesh". Mardi Gras grips New Orleans and, to a lesser degree, other cities in the United States and foreign countries, from the twelfth night after Christmas (Epiphany, January 6) until the day before Ash Wednesday.

Mardi Gras (French for "Fat Tuesday") is a single day of feasting and partying before the beginning of Lent and its accompanying personal sacrifices. The celebration, which can occur on any Tuesday from February 3 until March 9, falls 47 days before Easter, which is the first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox.

Mardi Gras is many things to many people. For some, it is night after night of revelry; for others it's a kid's glee at watching parades comparable to Macy's best. To the New Orleans tourist industry, Mardi Gras means \$100 million or more, for nearly 1 million people crowd parade routes on Mardi Gras day alone.

"Mardi Gras balls", "king cakes", "carriers of flambeaux", "krewes", and "throws" are all buzz words associated with this gala time of the year. For those involved in numismatics, the "throws" are most interesting. Many items are tossed from parade floats by the various krewes (carnival parade organizations), from cups, panties and beads to hats, frisbees and coconuts. But no airborne item has evoked more excitement than Alvin Sharpe's Mardi Gras doubloons.

Although many krewes have distributed Mardi Gras medals at one time or another since 1857, medals were not adopted as throws until the Krewe of Rex, "King of Carnival", used them in the 1960 parade. In mid-1959 Alvin Sharp approached the captain of the Krewe of Rex with an idea that he said he borrowed from the ancient Roman festivals and other traditions of the American South. The throwing of beads, baubles and small items of food was a tradition for both early explorers and paraders, who sought to appease and befriend the recipients of their favors.

Sharpe suggested throwing aluminum medals to the crowd. The krewe captain was skeptical at first, commenting that Roman dignitaries could throw medals or manhole covers with impunity, but any injury sustained from Mardi Gras throws might present legal problems for his organization.

In response, Sharpe proceeded to pelt the krewe captain with light, 15 gauge aluminum discs to prove their safety. The krewe captain was a man of vision, and his acceptance of Sharpe's idea started a tradition that in a few years saw almost every krewe throwing its own doubloons. Doubloon-swapping meetings became routine, and major department stores soon offered albums and duplicates for sale.

Sharpe's first doubloons were undated because the captain was concerned about the initial acceptance of the innovative throw. The concern proved unfounded, and the doubloons were the hit of the 1960 season. Soon, revelers learned techniques for successfully catching the tokens. Because they are light objects, the discs readily sail when thrown, and those reaching to pick up doubloons soon learned the danger of "stompers".

Stepping on doubloons seems to be inbred in young and old alike. Old ladies have kicked my hand to get at these practically worthless pieces of aluminum. Despite my numismatic upbringing, I, too, have seen the light and, yes, am now a stomper. It always amazes me that, for a handful of these doubloons, float riders' shouts of "show us your [chest]" brings immediate affirmative responses from males and females alike, who otherwise wouldn't expose themselves in public for a handful of \$100 bills.

Since 1960, when Sharpe produced 80,000 aluminum and 3,000 gold anodized doubloons, chanters of "hey mister, throw me something" have received aluminum doubloons of various colors, including pink, purple, blue and green. In fact, I estimate that more than 10,000 different doubloon types have been thrown and that some 200 million remain at large.

It has been pointed out that Sharpe's creation was not really the first Mardi Gras doubloon. Medals for the Krewe of Rex were struck as early as 1884, for distribution but not throwing. In 1956 quarter-dollar-size cardboard discs bearing the insignia of an Air Force association were thrown from a float, but Sharpe's doubloons were the first metal discs routinely tossed by a Mardi Gras krewe. Precious-metal doubloons bearing the same design as their aluminum counterparts also have been presented to certain krewe members.

Finally, as numismatists you're probably thinking that "doubloon" is not the correct term for Sharpe's creation. A doubloon is usually defined by numismatists as an old gold coin from Spain or its provinces. But don't argue this point with a New Orleanian; he or she would most likely "stomp" you before acknowledging your point.

Thanks are due Ray Vacarro, one of New Orleans' leading Mardi Gras doubloon dealers, for providing the facts contained herein and also for noting sales records of more than \$2,000 each for Rex silver doubloons and \$1,000 for aluminum pieces. Early pieces of other krewes can sell for \$100 to \$500 dollars each.

* * * * *

Mike Fuljenz, is Director of Numismatic Investment Services, for James U. Blanchard & Co., Metairie, La. He is a former ANACS authenticator and grader, a columnist for Numismatic News, author of the Market Forum, a contributor to the Red Book, Coin Dealer Newsletter and numerous investment newsletters and past officer of numerous state and local coin organizations, including the Society of U.S. Commemorative Coins. This article reprinted with his permission.

COLLECTING HISTORICAL COINS

By Victor England

Classical Numismatist

In the months to come I will introduce you to the art of collecting historical coins. I am a full time dealer in Ancient and Medieval coins since 1975. I could make more money dealing in U.S. coins - but then I would have to contend with the "Art" of grading. I sell history, art and mythology as much as I sell coins.

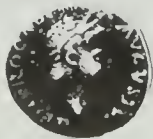
To introduce you to this field I have chosen an article published in Volume III of *The Connoisseur* - 1902.

On Coins & Medals, &c.

Of the many hobbies that appeal to a refined taste, to the mind nurtured in the love of ancient and modern times, and to the cultured intellect which delights in unravelling the mysteries and the oft-tangled skeins of mythology and history, no pursuit can claim priority of interest or fascination over the study and collection of coins.

These small but intensely interesting and truly veracious monuments of both ancient and medieval times place before the student and collector something vividly characteristic of the period in which they were issued - it may be the finely chiselled ideal features of some god or goddess of mythology, some long-forgotten customs of a now-extinct people, or the authentic portrait of some ancient conqueror of half a world.

All these things, therefore, appeal to the well educated and enquiring connoisseur, and if he be (as who is not these days?) a lover of art as well, then he can hardly fail to be attracted by the well-nigh irresistible charm which attaches to ancient coins.



Nero. Emperor of Rome from 54-68 AD. A Denarius bearing his portrait with the obverse inscription (from 6:00) IMP (Imperator) NERO CAESAR AVGVSTVS.

The Denarius was a silver coin that circulated in Rome from about 215 BC - 200 AD. The Denarius of the ancient world developed into the Denier of medieval France under Charlemagne and became the penny in England under Offa.

More in the next issue.

* * * * *

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

To conclude the literary section of this issue, it is fitting to review the past and future activities of PAN members throughout the state.

The resignation of PAN secretary Eileen Kelly was accepted at the February meeting with great reluctance. Her contribution to the PAN organization, during the past years cannot be expressed by words alone. She was the person that kept the records, edited the newsletter

and generated the correspondence. Eileen, with the help of Chester Trzcinski and support of her husband Gifford, published the *Clarion* - she was the dynamo and driving force needed to keep PAN growing. Eileen, thank you for your contributions to PAN - you shall be missed.

Only four persons are on record as joining PAN this quarter. Please welcome as new members - William Aquilino, R-87-456; Robert J. Zabos, R-87-457; William W. Klein, R-87-458; and Dennis R. Mellinger, R-87-459.

PANorama of Upcoming Coin Shows

August 2 - Williamsport Numismatic Society

Zarfar Grotto Building

East Second St., S. Williamsport, Pa.

August 16 - Scranton Coin Club Show

Hilton Lackawanna Station, Scranton, Pa.

August 26-30 - ANA Convention, Atlanta, Ga.

Sept. 12-13 - Harrisburg Coin Club Show

(See ad front cover for details)

Sept. 26-27 - Red Rose Coin Club Show

Farm & Home Center, Lancaster, Pa.

(See ad inside back cover)

October 3-4 - Wilkes Barre Coin Club Show

Quality Inn, Wilkes Barre, Pa.

Oct. 30-Nov. 1 - PAN Annual Convention

Host Farm, Lancaster, Pa.

Lancaster is again the site for the PAN convention this year, so keep this date open for your trip to the Dutch Country. The show committee, under the direction of Robert Matylewicz, is preparing another gala affair. Wayne Homren and John Burns have firmed up a varied educational program. Ray Rennick and Jerry Kochel shall be expecting your application for exhibit space (applications in the August newsletter). Also, the "Wizz Kids" will again butt heads on Sunday morning before show time. The auction will again be handled by Richard Cross.

The Economy Coin Club, CC-13, is celebrating their 25th. anniversary this year. To commemorate this event the Club has issued a mint set of 6 wooden nickels (1¢, 5¢, 10¢, 25¢, 50¢ and \$1.00). You can purchase a set by sending your request to William Soltis, 1142 Ridge Road Ext., Baden, Pa. 15005. The cost is \$1.50 each.

Although the *Clarion* is intended to be a publication related to Pennsylvania numismatics, many of our members have other interests. As you have seen, the articles in this issue are varied. We shall continue to use this format unless you, the members, indicate otherwise. Please complete the questionnaire on the back of the Puzzle Page and then work the puzzles - you may win a prize at our banquet. Also, seriously consider a note to your assemblyman regarding Senate Bill 422 - this bill is important to you as a coin collector (see page 17).

This issue of the *Clarion* was assembled with the help of Richard Duncan, Wayne Homren, Mortimer Kadushin and Ralph Mills. We wish to thank all the authors that contributed to this issue and to the advertisers that helped underwrite to cost of publishing this issue.

We need your help in publishing future issues - articles on your specialty and histories of Pa. coin clubs and dealers.

Your President
John Eshbach

PUZZLE PAGE

By James Hebel, Jr.

Assemble each letter combination to name past American Numismatic Association Convention cities. Circled letters are used to compose a fifth convention city. 10 points for each city. 50 points total.

T T D I R E O

A A O H M

L L A A S D

O O T N H S U

WORDGRAM

The subject of the WORDGRAM is world monetary units. Find as many as you can - forward, backward, vertical, horizontal, etc. Circle and list each monetary unit you find. If all are found 9 letters should remain uncircled and should spell a 9 letter country. 10 pts. for each listed unit found and 20 pts. for the 9 letter country. Reference used to compose the puzzle - Coin World Almanac.

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- 33.
- 35.

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E	R	I	A	Z	I	S	L	L	N	A
D	R	V	W	L	N	A	A	D	I	L
L	I	R	A	O	A	T	Z	O	K	O
I	B	E	R	T	R	Z	T	N	U	T
U	I	H	I	Y	E	N	E	G	A	I
G	I	A	P	L	E	U	U	L	B	L
O	L	I	M	L	N	I	Q	C	O	E
U	Y	P	E	K	Y	W	O	N	D	K
R	S	U	L	A	R	L	O	A	R	E
D	K	R	A	N	O	A	D	R	O	H
E	T	U	A	N	U	M	M	O	C	S

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- 4.
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- 16.
- 18.
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- 24.
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- 28.
- 30.
- 32.
- 34.
- 36.

9 Letter Country — — — — —

* * * * *

Now that you have solved the puzzles, or found all the monetary units you can, tear out this page and send to Puzzles, P.O. Box 71, Smoketown, Pa., 17576. Your score shall be tabulated and added to your entry from the next issue of the Clarion. Entries will be accepted until the next issue of the Clarion is mailed (tentatively Oct. 1). Members with the most points shall be recognized at the PAN annual banquet, Oct. 30. Note — space for 36 entries are listed in the Wordgram, this is not necessarily the correct number of monetary units in the puzzle; 36 spaces balanced the page.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF NUMISMATISTS

Founded in August 1978, ANA No. 101441.

() Regular \$5.00 per year. () Junior \$3.00 per year. () Family \$3.00 each per year.

() Life \$100.00 one time. () Club \$10.00 per year. () Club Life \$100.00 one time.

*If one is a regular of life member, the spouse, son, or daughter is \$3.00 each providing they live in the same household.

Name

Date

Address

City State Zip

Phone Date of Birth

Occupation

Numismatic Specialty

Other Club Affiliations

_____ Number
_____ By
_____ Date

Signature of Applicant

Signature of Sponsor

* * * * *

PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR OPINION

Please take the time to complete the questionnaire below. Your views on the articles, in this issue, will give your officers and publisher valuable ideas as to what kind of information you expect in the Clarion. Circle or check the appropriate square behind each title.

	Very Interesting	Interesting	Not Interesting	Did Not Read
1. Frank Vittor, Pittsburgh Sculptor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The Vergulde Draeck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Recent Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. From The Past	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Mardi Gras Doubloons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Collecting Historical Coins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Around The State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Puzzle Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Senate Bill 422	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments _____

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL**No. 422****Session of
1987**

INTRODUCED BY MADIGAN, WILT, HELFRICK, SALVATORE AND BELL,
FEBRUARY 27, 1987

REFERRED TO FINANCE, FEBRUARY 27, 1987

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), entitled "An
2 act relating to tax reform and State taxation by codifying
3 and enumerating certain subjects of taxation and imposing
4 taxes thereon; providing procedures for the payment,
5 collection, administration and enforcement thereof; providing
6 for tax credits in certain cases; conferring powers and
7 imposing duties upon the Department of Revenue, certain
8 employers, fiduciaries, individuals, persons, corporations
9 and other entities; prescribing crimes, offenses and
10 penalties," excluding coins from the sales and use tax.

11 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
12 hereby enacts as follows:

13 Section 1. Section 204 of the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6,
14 No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, is amended by
15 adding a clause to read:

16 Section 204. Exclusions from Tax.--The tax imposed by
17 section 202 shall not be imposed upon

18 * * *

19 (46) The sale at retail or use of coins sold by dealers
20 thereof.

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

A28L72JLW/1987D01798

COMPLIMENTS
GIBSON E. ARMSTRONG
STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 422 is currently in Committee and will need the support of all PA collectors to assure its passage. The Legislature will soon recess for the summer; but, before their return for the fall session, efforts to move the bill out of Committee should start. It is suggested that letters be written to your Assemblymen, sometime in late August, stating your position on this bill and asking them what their opinion on 422 is. More details on this effort in the August Newsletter.

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